

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SALCOMBE HARBOUR BOARD
HELD IN THE LIBRARY, CLIFF HOUSE, SALCOMBE
ON TUESDAY, 24 OCTOBER 2006**

MEMBERS

* Cllr J S Beer - Chairman

* Cllr J Brazil	* Mr J Barrett
* Cllr R J Carter	* Mr T Bass
* Cllr S L Rankin	* Mr R Gilbert
	* Mr C Harling
	* Mr H Marriage
	* Mr M O'Brien

* Denotes attendance

Also in attendance and participating:
Cllr R Rowe

Officers in attendance:

All Agenda Items – Head of Property Services, Head of Service (Salcombe Harbour)
and the Principal Accountant,

Officers in attendance for observation purposes:

Harbour Office Manager, Marine Conservation Officer and PA to the Strategic
Director (Operations)

SH.11/06 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE SALCOMBE
HARBOUR BOARD**

RESOLVED

That Mr C Harling be appointed Vice-Chairman of the
Salcombe Harbour Board.

SH.12/06 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Salcombe Harbour Board held on 5
September 2006 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the
Chairman.

SH.13/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

The Trainee Member Support Officer advised Members that given that the meeting was due to consider the percentage increase for harbour charges including moorings, those Members with a rental mooring within the Harbour were advised to declare a prejudicial interest and leave the meeting during the debate and vote on this item.

At a previous Board meeting (SH.17/05 refers), advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer (which was still considered relevant) noted that any breach of the Members Code of Conduct, to which all Board Members were bound, could lead to action being taken against that Member(s) by the Standards Board for England. Furthermore, the Monitoring Officer could consider advising the Council to reject the Board's recommendation on charges on the grounds that the recommendation was flawed because of the involvement of Members with a prejudicial interest.

However, the Board was informed that there were provisions whereby Members with a prejudicial interest could apply to the Council's Standards Committee for a dispensation to enable them to discuss and vote on this issue at future Board meetings.

Members were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of the meeting. These were recorded as follows:-

Messrs Barrett, Bass, Gilbert, Harling and O'Brien declared a prejudicial interest in item 10 'Review of Charges' (see minute SH.18/06 below) by virtue of their rental of moorings within the Harbour. The Members left the meeting during the discussion and vote on this item.

It was recorded that, although Board Members took the advice of officers and declared a prejudicial interest in item 10 'Review of Charges' and left the meeting during consideration of this item, they remained dissatisfied with this guidance.

SH.14/06 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Two members of the public attended the meeting to utilise the public question time session. Questions were recorded as follows:-

Questions from Mr Peter Stratton

- 1) In relation to the proposed charges for 2006/2007, concern was noted in relation to bands 1, 2 and 3 of section A of appendix A (as presented in the circulated report). It had been observed that there appeared to be no capacity for vessels between 4.5 metres in length and 6.0 metres in length.

In response, it was noted that there had been an administrative error when the report was published and that the bands should be amended to read as follows:-

- Band 1 Sails, canoes, sailing dinghies and any vessel without an engine;
- Band 2 Any vessel with an engine up to 4.5 metres in length;
- Band 3 Any vessel over 4.5 metres.

- 2) Concern over the sheer amount of traffic congestion at Batson Resident Compound during the peak season was aired and Mr Stratton questioned what could be implemented to overcome this. Mr Stratton also requested that the issue be addressed and a reorganisation of the compound be looked into.

In response, the Harbour Master informed Mr Stratton that he would investigate the concerns.

Question from Mr Peter Howard

- 3) Mr Howard questioned whether monies being earned through Harbour activity were to be ring-fenced from use by other services of the Council.

In response it was noted that currently there was no plans for monies to be transferred to other sections of the authority.

- 4) Mr Howard also questioned that if the Harbour began rationing by price, local people would be 'priced out' from renting a mooring.

In response it was noted that there were no plans to ration by price and, in any case, only 100% council tax payers were eligible for a mooring.

- 5) Were there any plans to increase the number of moorings?

In response, it was noted that there were not.

SH.15/06 **APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO HARBOUR COMMUNITY FORUMS**

RESOLVED

That the following Board Members be appointed as the Boards representative on the corresponding Community Forum Group:-

1. Mr J Barrett, The Salcombe Kingsbridge Estuary Association;
2. Mr T Bass, The Salcombe Kingsbridge Estuary Conservation Forum;
3. Mr R Gilbert, The Kingsbridge Estuary Boat Club.

SH.16/06 **FINAL ACCOUNTS 2005/2006**

A report was considered which advised Members of the Harbour's trading position in 2005/2006 together with brief details of the main variations from the original budget. Additionally, a summary of harbour reserves and balances was also provided.

In conclusion to the report, it was noted that the Harbour had been able to deliver services against a break even position, with additional income being generated throughout the year to offset additional costs which had arisen. However, the Principal Account pointed out that the breakeven position was only achieved through unfilled positions, namely the Assistant Harbour Master Post.

The Board requested that in future accounting reports, a more detailed breakdown of figures be provided to enable Members to examine the information in more detail. As it was currently, the Principal Account ensured the Board that he would circulate a more detailed report of the figures which were identified in the published report. Furthermore, it was noted that in future years the Final Accounts report would be incorporated in to the Financial Forecast report.

RESOLVED

That the Board notes the final accounts for 2005/2006 as set out within Appendix A of the circulated report.

SH.17/06 **FINANCIAL FORECAST 2007/2008**

A report was considered which identified issues facing the Harbour for the forthcoming year and demonstrated the financial impact these had on the trading position and Harbour charges. This information also assisted Members in deciding future levels of service provision and set the 2007/2008 budget charges.

The report concluded in saying that the adoption of a prudent, self-financing budget for 2007/08 would allow the Board time to assess future service levels and formulate a business plan to address the service requirements over the medium to long term.

During discussion, the following points were made:-

- a) The cost of the waste recycling expenditure. Following a query, it was noted that grants were received from the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty funds and the Royal Yachting Association Blue Green, with the harbours contribution being in time and management;
- b) Appendix A of the circulated report. Members were concerned with what seemed to be an excess in the increase on insurance costs and moorings. In response, it was noted that increases in mooring costs were due to maintenance works. With regard to insurance, figures were quoted from the Finance Department but for reassurance purposes this would be clarified.

Members also enquired as to what Central Support Services entailed along with Miscellaneous costs. For clarification, the Board was informed that Central Support Services encompassed the cost of non Salcombe Harbour Officer's time working on Salcombe Harbour related projects.

In response to the number of clarifications requested by Board Members, a Member **PROPOSED** an addition to the recommendation of the report for the Board to receive a detailed breakdown of the figures identified in Appendix A. This was subsequently **SECONDED** and declared **CARRIED**.

RESOLVED

That the Board:-

1. notes the current year's financial position;
2. acknowledges the service pressures set out within paragraphs 5 to 8 of the presented report;
3. notes the current levels of Harbour reserves and the potential future projects as set out in Appendix B of the presented report;
4. receive a detailed breakdown of the figures identified in Appendix A of the circulated report.

SH.18/06 REVIEW OF CHARGES FOR 2007/2008

A report was considered which had been prepared to enable the Board to set the Harbour rates for 2007/2008. The report advised that a sub committee of the Harbour Board had been established to consider fees and charges for the 2007/08 season. Having met on two occasions, the sub-committee recommended that a budget was set for 2007/08 which allowed the business to continue to successfully operate at a break-even position throughout the year, whilst adequate time and resources were allocated to a complete review for the 2008/09 season which would be tied into the new Harbour Board's strategic business plan.

In presenting the report, the Harbour Master highlighted the falling trend in the number of visiting yachts and the perception that visitors were not gaining value for money especially in terms of the facilities available. The importance of the water taxi as an integral connection between yachts and the town was also acknowledged, along with the need to address the regime at Whitestrand.

In conclusion to his presentation, the Harbour Master highlighted the preferred option for charges as identified in appendix A of the circulated report, which also encompassed all the proposed changes in the charging policy as set out in paragraph 17 of the report.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- a) concern was expressed that visitors were not receiving value for money due to a lack of facilities;
- b) the importance of establishing a working group to address the issue of fees and charges for the 2007/2008 period;
- c) Members' agreement with the report's proposal to investigate further business moorings which were currently making a healthy profit for the business;
- d) the need for improved connections between the town, visiting yachts and users of the Harbour.

RESOLVED

That the Board:-

1. agree the changes to the charging policy as set out in paragraph 17 of the circulated report, and amend the Salcombe Harbour Policy Document accordingly;
2. **RECOMMEND** to Council to approve the proposed charges in Annex A of the circulated report, for implementation from April 2007.

SH.19/06

REORGANISATION OF SALCOMBE HARBOUR PERSONNEL STRUCTURE

A report was considered which informed the Board of the changes to the Salcombe Harbour staff structure. The report advised that for over two years Salcombe Harbour had had a depleted and difficult organisational structure which had adversely affected service output and staff morale. It was concluded that the deletion of the Deputy Harbour Master's post from the structure to fund the enriched posts for line managers and the service delivery level of the Harbour organisation should provide more flexibility, a flatter organisational structure which was focused on service delivery, whilst providing enhanced job prospects within the structure, and a sustainable workforce for the future.

RESOLVED

That the Board notes the changes to the Salcombe Harbour Staff Structure.

SH.20/06 SAFETY INCIDENT REPORT

A report was considered which presented the findings of the Harbour Master's Investigation into the incident involving the trip boat *Joseph Soar* and the Beillevaire family in an inflatable dingy on 17 August 2006. The findings of the investigation noted that, in conjunction with the Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA), the Harbour Master concluded that this was an unfortunate accident which could have been avoided had all parties involved maintained a proper lookout and the dinghy had not been overloaded and so could manoeuvre satisfactorily. Blame could not be attributed to either party in isolation of the other and therefore punitive action was inappropriate.

A Member of the Board was dissatisfied with the wording in the recommendation as identified in the report. He felt that it was more relevant to read "*note the correspondence and endorse the actions of the Harbour Master*", to which the remainder of the Board agreed. It was therefore:-

RESOLVED

That the Board:-

1. note the correspondence and endorse the actions of the Harbour Master;
2. review the Harbour's Risk Assessments.

SH.21/06 MATTERS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION BY THE BOARD

- Whitestrand;
- Fees and Charges 2007/2008;
- Facilities – visions for the future;
- Moorings Policy;
- Local Management Information Systems;
- Operation of Water Taxi Service;
- Member Training.

(Meeting commenced at 2.30 pm and concluded at 4.20 pm).

Chairman